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NT 725
EXEGESIS OF GALATIANS
Fall 2004

Dr. Ben Witherington, III

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

A study of selected passages in Galatians, this course will deal with the various textual, historical, rhetorical, exegetical, theological, and ethical concerns raised by this letter. Literary and genre issues will also be addressed to try to determine the structure of the work and its literary type or kind. The focus in the course will be on familiarizing the student not only with the content of this book, but also with the exegetical and hermeneutical issues that it raised and raises.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Having successfully completed this course, participants should:

- (1) be able to recognize the importance of a close reading of the text of Galatians;
- (2) be able to begin to master the skills necessary to exegete the Greek text of Galatians;
- (3) grasp the importance of the rhetorical structure of the works and its importance for understanding Pauline thought;
- (4) understand the role of the works in the New Testament canon;
- (5) be able to propose fruitful ways in which Galatians may be read within the horizons of the contemporary church and world; understand the importance of Romans for the Wesleyan concepts of election and sanctified living;

to employ a range of exegetical approaches relevant to the interpretation of this and other NT letters;

to be able to identify central issues in the critical study of Galatians;

to be able to articulate the central theological assumptions and presuppositions one brings to the interpretation of Galatians;

to be able to critically assess commentaries and secondary literature, learning to distinguish between scholarly and devotional treatments of this letter;

to be able to understand Galatians in its social, historical, literary, and canonical contexts

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND READINGS

The student should have completed the textbooks by mid-term. Longenecker and Witherington should be worked through as one reads through Galatians in preparation for the class. The reading will count 50% of the grade for this class, and will be evaluated when one incorporates what has been learned into the twenty-page exegesis paper (twenty pages of text), which is the major requirement of the class, besides attendance, participation, and reading. This paper may have endnotes rather than footnotes and may follow Turabian, APA, Slade or Chicago manual of style. Fee's guide to how to do an exegesis paper may be followed, and one will wish to consult the sample exegesis papers on reserve in the library. **This twenty-page exegesis paper will be due by Friday, October 29.** There will also be a take home final. The final is worth 25% of the grade as is the exegesis paper

1. B. Witherington, III, Paul's Narrative Thought World, (Westminster, 1994).
2. N. Longenecker, Galatians, (Word, 1990).
3. B. Witherington, III, Grace in Galatia: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary, Grand Rapids, (Eerdmans, 1998).
4. John Barclay, Obedying The Truth, (Westminster Press, 1995((pb).
5. B. Witherington, III, The Paul Quest, (InterVarsity, 1996) pb

The student may also wish to purchase J.D.G. Dunn's commentary on Galatians or possibly, for those wanting more detail, H.D. Betz's.

CLASS SCHEDULE

We will be working through the book of Galatians in the Greek and dealing with major topics as we go.